

REMARKS

The Examiner's thoughtful attention to this application is sincerely appreciated.

The comments of the Examiner in the Office Action of March 18, 2003, are well taken.

The shrinking of the felt material to produce a **smooth resilient surface** is important because:

1. A smooth resilient surface is less abrasive and is less likely to abrade the skin of an animal than a fabric with a rough surface finish.
2. A smooth resilient surface is less likely to catch on the teeth of a dog and is less likely to be readily chewed by a dog.
3. A smooth resilient surface is more difficult for a dog to tear off the toy.

Another important feature of the invention set forth at lines 1 to 8 of page 8 of the Specification is the ability of the dog toy to bend in the manner indicated by arrows L and M in Fig. 1. This feature of the invention has been incorporated into the amended Claims and does not appear to be fairly suggested by the *Koros et al. reference* or by the

1 **unsealed** toys set forth in the other references of record. A toy that is sealed and
2 bendable is safer for a dog to utilize. Conventional **sealed** objects like footballs are
3 substantially **rigid** and are not intended to bend.
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6 Applicant respectfully submits that the amended Claims are not rendered obvious
7 under 35 U.S.C. Section 103 by the references of record.
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9 If the Examiner finds merit in the foregoing remarks and amendments, it is believed
10 the application is in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited.
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13 Respectfully submitted,
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